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THIRTIETH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

VERMONT COLONIZATION SOCIETY.

PRESENTED

OCTOBER 18, 1849.

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BURLINGTON:
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REPORT.

MR. PRESIDENT
AND GENTLEMEN OF THE SOCIETY:

THIRTY years have passed away since that evening, on which, a few friends of civil and social Liberty assembled in the old State House, in this village, to unite their counsels and their efforts for improving the condition of the colored race among us. The work, to which they devoted themselves, in connexion with their fellow citizens, was nothing less than that of establishing an empire of civilized and Christian men, on a barbarous coast, three thousand miles distant. It was well understood to be a *great* work,—and that it would require time. Every thing was to be done,—and that by men who had neither ships nor money. The country to be colonized, even, had not been explored. Doubt and opposition were to be encountered at home; and obstacles, without number, to be surmounted abroad;—and this by men who had no practical knowledge or experience in the work they were undertaking.

Truly, as we look back over these thirty, fleeting years, and then survey the results already gained, we cannot help exclaiming,—"What hath God wrought!"

Through all these years, and amidst opposition and opprobrium, your Society has steadily pursued its way: and every year it has done something to help forward the good work.

During the year now closing, but little has been done in Vermont, in the way of collecting funds, for the want of an agency. Your Secretary, (who on former years, without charge to the Society,) has visited such places as were with-

in his reach, and preached and made collections, has been prevented from these labors during the last year.

In the month of December last, by the advice of such members of the Board as could be consulted, a commission was given to the Rev. Thomas Kidder, of Windsor, and to Dea. Samuel Tracy, of Hartford. Mr. Kidder, about the time of receiving his commission, was called away for a season, to another department of labor, and did not enter upon his agency. Mr. Tracy devoted one month to the work with his usual zeal and success. During this brief period, he collected $282,64; of which $124,22 was for the African Repository, which was remitted directly to Washington, and the balance was paid over to the Treasurer. It was the expectation of the Board, that Mr. Tracy would spend several months in the service of the Society, but sickness in his family compelled him to suspend his labors.

A few parishes, and many individuals, in the State, without waiting for the solicitations of an agent, have generously forwarded their contributions, thereby evincing their interest in this cause. It will be seen from the Repository, that about $450 have been transmitted from this State directly to the parent Society without passing through your Treasury. A little more than one hundred and twenty dollars of this sum was in payment for the Repository.

Fifteen hundred copies of the last Annual Report were published and circulated through the State. By the diffusion of correct information in respect to the objects and the successes of the Society, attention has been awakened and confidence gained in places where confidence was before withheld.—Ten years ago, such was the state of the public mind in most of the parishes of New England, that pastors felt constrained to exclude this subject from their pulpits,—or, if they desired themselves to preach in relation to it, they were greatly embarrassed. But now the field is wider open. Our agents have no difficulty in getting a hearing. The storm of prejudice and passion has passed;---and the spirits who raised it, if not silent, are made powerless, by the prev-

alence of truth; through Vermont the wavering and doubting have been confirmed into friendship, and thousands, who once stood aloof, are now ready cheerfully to aid us.

But while your Society has been growing in the favor and confidence of the people, and gaining new friends, it has been called to mourn the loss of some of its old and *steadfast* friends, who have been removed by death. Among these we may note the late Samuel Hickok Esq., of Burlington. Deacon Hickok had long been a regular contributor to all the benevolent enterprises of the age. To all, he was a contributor upon principle,—a cheerful giver,—not waiting for the call of agents; but when the time came, having laid by him in store, he was ready with his offering. He died in June last. In his will, besides the like or larger sums to several other objects, he left a Legacy to the Colonization Society of $500, which is to be paid in by the first day of June 1850.—From these statements and from the report of your Treasurer, it will apppear that something more than one thousand dollars has been paid and pledged to the cause in our State during the last year.

The operations of the Parent Society have been, under the blessing of God, unusually prosperous. At its last annual meeting in January, the Society had sent out 443 emigrants during the year then closing. Of these, 324 were liberated for the purpose of going to Liberia. At the same date the Society had before it 657 *bona fide* applications for a passage. Since January it has sent out 5 expeditions, carrying out 422 emigrants. Of these, the larger proportion were but recently slaves, but had been liberated by their masters, and had been under instruction, to qualify them for usefulness in their new home. Since the same date, about 500 applications have been made for passage to the new Republic. Thus, the more colonists we send, the more numerous are the applications made. Every emigrant we send there furnishes a new argument for emancipation and a new centre of attraction in Africa, drawing to that Home of Liberty, the colored people of this continent. This

is precisely what we have always expected. Funds are now greatly needed to send waiting applicants, and if they are not furnished, it will produce discouragement and inevitably check the spirit of emigration.

A gentleman in Cincinnati, Ohio, of great wealth and liberality, has offered to furnish the means for purchasing Cape Mount or Gallenas, and present it to the colored people of Ohio, Illinois and Indiana, if they will emigrate and form a new settlement under the auspices of the Republic of Liberia.

Also a gentleman in Tennessee, who owns about three hundred slaves, who have been accustomed to the manufacture of iron, has given freedom to his people, and proposes to settle them, at his own expense, in Liberia, in the nighborhood of some beds of ore, near New Cesters. This measure, when accomplished, must be of incalculable benefit to the Republic, which is now obliged to depend mainly on importation of all articles in iron.

The amount of receipts of the Parent Society during its last fiscal year, was $50,114,37; the amount of its expenditures $51,954, 14.

Peace, health and prosperity have prevailed generally throughout the Republic. Its independence has been promptly and generously acknowledged by England and France, and probably ere this by Prussia, and commercial treaties of very great importance to the colonists have been entered into. The boundaries of the Republic also have been settled by treaty stipulations, in the most prudent manner, forestalling all possible occasions for disagreement with the tribes on their borders, and with foreign claimants: so that the Republic, well organized upon a constitution, which is but a transcript of our own—in peace and prosperity, now embraces about one hundred thousand inhabitants. This population consists of between 6000 and 7000 emigrants from this country; about 15,000 natives, who are so far civilized as to be allowed to vote, and 80,000 from the tribes within the limits of the Republic, who have bound themselves to be governed by

its laws, and thankfully enjoy its protection. In short; all the interests of the colonists have been advancing as rapidly as could be expected. "The cause of education has received increased attention. The churches have mostly been blessed with revivals of religion. The native tribes are becoming more and more subject to the laws and accustomed to the manners and habits of civilized life. And judging from present prospects, there is no limit that can be fixed to the good influence which Liberia and her institutions can exert upon the native tribes, short of the entire temporal and spiritual regeneration of Africa."

It is understood that a gentleman of wealth and liberality has expressed to the Rev. William McLain, Secretary of the American Colonization Society, his intention of giving a handsome donation for the purpose of establishing a College in Liberia. Such an Institution is evidently the greatest want that the new Republic now has. It is essential to her well-being. It may be set down as a political axiom, that a *republic can not exist without the Church, the College and the School House.* In Liberia, her Teachers of religion and of science must be trained on her own soil and beneath her own bright sun. The Board of the Massachusetts Colonization Society took this subject into consideration at their last annual meeting, and have issued a circular to other auxiliary societies, inviting their co-operation in maturing the plan of such an Institution. As the funds for a College in Liberia would necessarily be raised in this country, and for a while, at least, could probably be best managed here, it is thought that a Board of Trustees should be, at once, created by the several State Societies, and be qualified to receive and hold funds for the purpose. As the Vermont Colonization Society is the oldest in the sisterhood of auxiliaries, why may she not, with perfect propriety, proceed at once to appoint one or more Trustees for such an Institution, to act with such others as may be appointed in other States. And where is there a Legislature, more wise, discreet and ready for a good action than our own, now in session, to give to persons thus elect-

ed an act of Incorporation? Why may not Vermont, who was first in this field of benevolent action, be the first in honor, in giving a College to the new Republic?

We have thus taken an imperfect view of what the friends of Colonization are doing in this country and of the benign results abroad, and we think there is every reason for encouragement. The spirit of emancipation and of emigration is rapidly increasing at home, and all things are prosperous in the Republic of Liberia.

But there are other movements in progress, of great practical interest to the African race, and which equally indicate that the day of their redemption draweth nigh. There is a progress of Liberty. This is *one* characteristic of the age. Every where, men are inquiring into the ground and nature of their inalienable rights. Thrones are tottering, and tyrants are trembling under the power of this scrutiny. This progress of what we may call the Spirit of Liberty, affects all---even the masses. We see it in many recent events at home and abroad, and out of this will flow the redemption of the negro race. In such circumstances, the human mind, however crushed, can not be bound forever. In proportion as arts and civilization advance, and as Christianity unfolds itself in the hearts of men, governments will come to a juster policy.

Events of the last year indicate this progress of Liberty, and an increasing respect for the rights of man. Even the Autocrat of Russia, the Despots of Austria and the Pope of Rome have learned something new in this direction.

The government of France have issued a decree abolishing slavery in all its colonies. The present French West India colonies are Martinique, Gaudaloupe and Guiana, embracing a population of 300,000, two hundred and thirty thousand of which *were* slaves but *are now free.*

The high and honorable consideration with which President Roberts was every where received in this country and in Europe, and the courteous and complimentary manner in which the independence of Liberia was acknowledged by

the principal governments of Europe, are not only indications of better feelings towards the colored race, but are incidents which will have an important influence on our Southern States. In the spirit of common justice, the act of recognition ought to have been *first* made by our own Government. This act was due from us to the young State, whose citizens and officers have gone out from us and whose infancy has been watched over and nurtured by the people of this land. But since our Executive have been so tardy in doing this act of simple justice, we are happy to know that the people are awake, and have been sending in their petitions from every part of the Union, asking for a prompt recognition.

Another sign of promise is found in the movement in Kentucky. That State is about revising its Constitution. And the prospect has been, that, under the influence of her leading statesmen, and the prevalence of better views, the new Constitution would provide for the gradual emancipation of her slaves. The plan suggested by Mr. Clay, and now under consideration, proposes that all slaves born after 1855 be free, at the age of twenty-five ;—and that the offspring of such as are thus made free, shall be free from birth, but shall be apprenticed until they are twenty-one. We are assured by good authority, that a majority of the legal voters in Kentucky would sustain this plan and make it a part of the new Constitution, if the question could be decided by its own merits, dissociated from other political questions.

Should this measure fail for the present,—as it may,—we are assured that there is in Kentucky a progress in public sentiment, which will ere long effect the overthrow of slavery, and cause the oppressed to go free.

There is another class of facts which show the progress of public sentiment in favor of freedom.—Contrary, probably, to the impressions of many, it is nevertheless a fact, that slavery in this country has been continually narrowing its circle, ever since the Declaration of Independence. The progress of emancipation has been slow, it is true ; but it has been continuous and lasting. In 1776, slavery existed in every

one of the colonies, nor was it merely nominal. In Massachusetts and New York it prevailed to such an extent that every sixteenth person was a slave; but of those thirteen States nine are now free, and in the other four, slavery has been diminishing since 1820.

In 1776, there was but one free State:—In 1849 there are fifteen,—a gain of fourteen. On the other hand, there were then twelve slave States and there are now but fifteen. Thus, it will be seen that free territory has increased much faster than Slave territory. In 1776, the slave States were twelve to one. Now they do not exceed the number of the free. While whole States and territories, that in 1776 were oppressed with Slavery, have been made free—NOT ONE FOOT OF LAND THAT WAS THEN FREE HAS BEEN CONVERTED INTO SLAVE SOIL.

Our government, in spite of opposition from slave-holders, has generally acted in favor of freedom, in reference to all new territory. A writer in the N. Y. Tribune remarks, in an article on the extinction of slavery, that there has been territory acquired by our Government in six instances.

"First. The territory north-west of the Ohio River and east of the Mississippi, by grant of some of the old States. A large portion of this was slave territory. All of it has since been made, by *law*, free forever.

Second. The great Province of Louisiana, purchased of France. It was all Slave territory, before it came under our flag:—a law of the American Congress passed in 1820, made all of it north of 36° 30', *free forever*.

Third. Florida, all slave territory before it became ours, and it remains so still.

Fourth. Texas, a slave nation when she joined us, and it remains so still.

Fifth. Oregon, the law of March 1848 has made it all free forever, and

Sixth. California and New Mexico, just acquired from Mexico, and now as free as Vermont."

From these facts, it will be seen that a wide zone of ter-

ritory—once trodden by slaves—a zone embracing seventeen degrees of latitude and nearly sixty of longitude, has been made free forever by the legislature of our Republic. If the government have not acted as fast and as boldly as we could wish, it must be conceded that it has done much, and this in the face of great opposition from southern men. Let us be thankful for all that has been done to promote the progress of freedom, and of human happiness, and from these encouraging signs of the times let us derive confidence to inspire our future efforts.

Let us go on with new faith in the power of colonization to benefit the African and to bless the world. We believe that it is God's plan for replenishing the earth. His word and his Providence prove this. The land of Canaan was civilized by a colony from Ur of the Chaldees, under his special guidance. Phœnician colonies carried the light of letters and the arts of civilization into Greece. Greece carried the same to Rome, and Rome by her colonies carried civilization to England, and England in her colonies brought these blessings to America. And why should not America send her colonies, with her arts and letters, to Africa, and so complete the circle. Let us fall in with the designs of God, and become co-workers with Him, showing our faith by our works.

In behalf of the Board of Managers,

J. K. CONVERSE, *Secretary.*

PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

ANNUAL MEETING.

Agreeably to previous notice, the thirtieth Anniversary of the Vermont Colonization Society was held at the Brick Church in Montpelier, Oct. 18th, 1849,—7 o'clock P. M.:

HON. SAMUEL C. CRAFTS, President,

in the Chair.

Prayer was offered by Rev. Mr. Fleming, of Burlington.

The Secretary being absent, on motion of the Rev. Dr. Wheeler, Rev. Geo. B. Manser was elected Secretary, *pro. tem.*

The Chair appointed a Committee to present a nomination of officers for the ensuing year.

The Treasurer's Report was then read and accepted.

The Report of the Secretary in behalf of the Board of Managers, was then read.

Hon. William C. Kittredge, of Fairhaven, offered the following resolution, seconded by Hon. William Nash of New Haven:

Resolved, That the Report which has just been read be printed and circulated under the direction of the Managers.

Remarks were then offered by Hon. Wm. C. Kittredge and the Rev. Dr. Smith, President of the Vermont University.

Rev. Dr. Wheeler, of Burlington, introduced the following resolution, seconded by Hon. James Bell, of Walden.

Resolved, That the success that has attended the Colonization Society should fill us with devout gratitude; and should encourage us to make the most earnest and diligent efforts to increase the funds and to strengthen the influence of this Society.

Remarks were made by both the above named gentlemen.

The Committee on nominations reported the following named gentlemen as the officers of this Society, for the year ensuing, viz:

PRESIDENT,

HON. SAMUEL C. CRAFTS.

VICE PRESIDENTS,

REV. JOHN WHEELER, D. D.
HON. DANIEL KELLOGG,
J. P. FAIRBANKS, ESQ.

SECRETARY,

REV. JOHN K. CONVERSE.

TREASURER,

HON. DANIEL BALDWIN.

AUDITOR,

HON. JOSEPH HOWES.

MANAGERS,

HON. CHARLES PAINE,
HON. DAVID PIERCE,
HENRY STEVENS, ESQ.
HON. ZIMRI HOWE,
" PETER STAR,
REV. THOMAS KIDDER,
NATHAN B. HASWELL, ESQ.
CHARLES ADAMS, ESQ.
REV. WORTHINGTON SMITH, D. D.
" GEORGE B. MANSER,
" JOHN H. WORCESTER,
GEN. D. W. C. CLARKE.

Which report was accepted and adopted, and the Society then adjourned *sine die*.

G. B. MANSER, *Secretary pro. tem.*